

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6560

As Reported by House Committee On:
Judiciary

Title: An act relating to animal cruelty.

Brief Description: Modifying animal cruelty provisions. (REVISED FOR 1ST
SUBSTITUTE: Concerning animal cruelty.)

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Parks, Fish and Wildlife (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Fraser, Swecker, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Thibaudeau, Fairley and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Judiciary: 2/27/04 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Provides that the malicious use of a hook in a manner whereby the hook purposefully pierces the flesh of a bird or mammal is animal cruelty in the first degree.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Lantz, Chair; Moeller, Vice Chair; Carrell, Ranking Minority Member; McMahan, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell, Flannigan, Kirby, Lovick and Newhouse.

Staff: Trudes Tango Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

Animal cruelty in the first degree, a class C felony, involves intentionally inflicting substantial pain on, causing physical injury to, or killing an animal by a means that causes undue suffering. A class C felony is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and up to a \$10,000 fine.

In addition to the more general animal cruelty statute, there are various laws under the

fish and wildlife code that govern trapping. A state trapping license allows a person to trap mammals, but it is a gross misdemeanor to use body-gripping traps. Limited use of certain traps, such as padded leghold traps or nonstrangling foot snares, are allowed if the person obtains a special permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. There is no statute explicitly prohibiting the use of hooks for trapping birds or mammals.

Summary of Bill:

The animal cruelty statute is amended to provide that the malicious use of a hook in a manner whereby the hook purposefully pierces the flesh of a bird or mammal is animal cruelty in the first degree.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: A person's pet can get hooked on baited hooks used for trapping. Hooks have been used for trapping ever since the passage of the initiative that banned more humane ways of trapping. This bill fixes a gap in the law.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Oke, prime sponsor; and Senator Fraser, sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.